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October 21, 2019

Mary Nichols, Chairwoman
California Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Maximize Investment in Zero-Emission Buses in FY 2019-20 Funding Plan for Clean Transportation Incentives

Chairwoman Nichols and Board Members:

On behalf of San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA), I write to you today to respectfully urge you to maximize the state's investment in zero-emission buses (ZEBs) and supporting infrastructure. This investment, which should flow to public transit agencies through the proposed Advanced Technology Demonstration and Pilots Projects *and* the Hybrid and Zero-Emission Truck and Bus Voucher Incentive Project, is critical to offsetting the high upfront cost of ZEB deployments. Increased funding will support RTA'S implementation of the Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) regulation while avoiding adverse impacts to our core transit service.

As you review our request, we ask that you consider that public transit is the only industry in the transportation sector that is entirely subsidized by the public. We also ask that you recall that you specifically selected our industry, despite chronic funding shortfalls and our primary role as mobility providers, to serve as the testing ground for zero-emission heavy-duty technologies by adopting the ICT regulation. The ICT regulation was adopted on the premise that the mass deployment of zero-emission bus will develop the components, supply chains, knowledge and experience necessary to electrify other heavy-duty industries. RTA, like other transit agencies across the state, has accepted this task and is working hard to implement the ICT regulation. Today, we in the planning process for incorporating ZEBs in operations. We argue only that your decision to prioritize the electrification of our fleets requires ARB to also prioritize transit agencies when it comes to funding.

We voice concerns that transit agencies are ineligible for the \$40 million for Advanced Technology Demonstrations and Pilot Projects. Looking back to the justification for the ICT regulation, we urge you to consider setting aside a portion of this funding for a large-scale demonstration of zero-emission buses, inclusive of infrastructure buildout. A demonstration of this kind could serve as a roadmap for transit agencies statewide, which are still struggling through small-scale ZEB deployments and which will need to submit fleet transition plans, beginning as soon as 2021. We also urge you consider modifying several of the programmatic changes proposed for HVIP, with the goal of holding transit agencies harmless, regardless of the oversubscription of the program. More specifically, we recommend that ARB: establish a setaside for zero-emission buses, ensuring that transit agencies receive a minimum funding

The Regional Transit Authority is a Joint Powers Agency serving the residents and visitors of:

Arroyo Grande • Atascadero • Grover Beach • Morro Bay • Paso Robles • Pismo Beach • San Luis Obispo • County of San Luis Obispo